

was taken May 12, 1875." Here again a discrepancy in dates is apparent, and the record is omitted altogether in his final published list. This record may be safely eliminated from consideration, and there appear to be no others at all sufficient to admit the species to the state list. Jerome Trombley, of Petersburg, Monroe County, a careful and keen observer, was unable to find it in a section of the state where it might naturally be expected to occur if at all.

NOTES ON THE BREEDING HABITS OF AGE-LAIUS PHOENICEUS.

BY NOEL L. HACKETT.

The following observations on the habits of the Red-winged Blackbird (*Agelaius p. phaniceus*) were made during the spring of 1910 on a farm in the Missouri river bottoms about thirty-five miles south of Sioux City.

The birds came into the country along about the last of March from the twenty-fifth to the thirty-first. The males seemed to flock together and the females by themselves, but they came so close together that I could not tell whether there was any difference in the date of arrival. They came in large flocks containing several other species, such as the yellow-headed blackbird and bronzed grackle.

They were seen for about a week and then it seemed as though they had almost all disappeared from the country, but again about the first of May they appeared in small flocks of twenty-five or thirty, and took to the meadows rather than to the trees as they had done earlier in the season. They now began the process of mating, but it was impossible for me to tell much about the way this was accomplished.

However, there seemed to be a scarcity of females, and all over the meadow little flocks could be seen, consisting of four or five males and one female. On the Sunday morning following their second arrival I could not find in the whole col-

only a single unmated male. They had mated and the extra males had flown to some other territory. As I have indicated they nested in a colony. There were fifteen pairs and we found fourteen nests within a very few rods of each other.

They built their nest of weeds and dead grass. The foundation was of coarse weeds laid crossways in layers, thus raising the nest off the ground about an inch and a half. Then the nest proper was made of very fine grass wound around it horizontally with some very fine roots woven in up and down to hold it together. It is a very neat little affair about two and one-half or three inches across the top. Both birds worked diligently in the process of home-building and it was here that I found my pair and was able to note some marks of distinction, which were: on the male a light spot on his breast that was almost a freak mark, and on the female a little tinge of red on the left wing.

They finished the building of the nest on the twenty-third day of May; then they rested over the twenty-fourth and the first egg appeared on the twenty-fifth and one each succeeding day until the twenty-eighth, when the clutch was completed. It is very hard to describe the eggs. They are a sort of a pale blue bordering on green and having a sort of a yellowish tinge. They were spotted at the large end with large irregular brownish-black spots, while the lower or smaller half was perfectly clear.

They were about one inch through the long way. They were laid in the nest with the small end towards the center. In order to see if that was the intention I took the eggs and pointed the small end of each towards the outside, but the next day they were all changed back again and in that position they just filled the nest.

The female did not begin incubating immediately after the clutch was laid, but waited and seemed to rest for three days. Then she began the process of incubation. At one time, about six o'clock I went to the nest, and as I approached the nest the male flew off, seeming to indicate that he was assisting in the process.